

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church
The Fourth Sunday after Easter
April 28, 2024
rmcneely+

. . .with whom is no variableness,
neither shadow of turning

Our 21st Century lives are a whirlwind of change.
The mobile telephone that has become a handheld computer
 With airwaves of cell towers
 and wifi filling the air almost everywhere
The benefits and ills of social media have replaced verbal contact.
 We don't write letters and put them in the post
 We don't anticipate a reply letter in a few weeks.
Instant information at our fingertips
 How many times has a question arisen among friends
 When someone pulls out their phone and finds the answer.
Psychologists now recognize tech addictions.
 The price we pay for an invisible theft of data.
When was the last time you bought something with a check?
 Paid a bridge toll with cash.
We buy a cup of coffee with a phone.
Books with paper pages are becoming rare.
When was the last time you sat down and read a newspaper?
Cars and trucks without drivers
Grocery store checkout without a clerk
Sail boats approaching 50 miles per hour.

The workplace is nothing like it was
 The workplace has invaded our homes,
 Liberating for some
 But for others work has become constant
 Never away from the job, from work
 Constantly checking and answering emails, phone calls

In this time of presidential campaigns,
Change has acquired a positive connotation
Change in and of itself is touted by the candidates,
We don't even expect them to say from what and to what.
It is enough that they speak of change.

We have experienced a moral collapse
In our fallen, forlorn and evil world.

Even scripture,
The inspired word of God,
With every new translation and
Every new interpretation
Seems subject to the howls of change.

Could we have predicted any of this even two decades ago?

History is something we live every day
but which can only be seen from the distance of years.
The point is that when you sit back and compare the life we led
10 or 20 years ago,
it is almost shocking to mark the changes
and how very quickly they have taken place,
the sundry and manifold changes of the world.

What can we grasp to anchor our lives as change howls
Through and around us

Sweeping away the good with the bad?
Is there some aspect of our lives that we can depend upon to
always be there?
Some rock to grasp to help us weather the storm of change?
Something without variableness, neither shadow of turning?

Saint James today introduces the answer.

He offers a defense

Acknowledges that by the will of God

We are begat with the word of truth.

Somewhere deep inside is engrafted the Word of Truth.

To reach it he has sagely advice:

Be slow to speak.

Be swift to hear.

Be slow to wrath.

No one ever learned anything by speaking.

James recommends we spend more time listening,

Learning

Than we do speaking.

He recommends that we be slow to anger

For anger is a waste

And does not work God's righteousness.

He notes that we therefore must lay apart,

Separate ourselves,

From all filthiness,

From all superfluity of naughtiness.

Remove from our lives, our daily experience, our minds,

The filth, the detritus of our lives.

The deception and diversion of evil.

Not an easy task in these days of almost constant

Often subliminal attacks upon our attention

To prompt us to buy, subscribe or accept something.

Wall Street learned many years ago that sex sells.

Nudity has become the medium of exchange.

Not easy to avoid.

It is ubiquitous,

Powerful

And subtle.

However, Jesus comes to our aide.

St John has captured it for us in today's Gospel.

John has given us the "Farewell Discourse" of Jesus.

Beginning last week and continuing through this week and the next

The Church directs us to the time in the Upper Room

To the night in which He was betrayed,

The Last Supper,

And to the Farewell Discourse.

We have a seat at the table as,

Jesus tells the 12 of the Holy Ghost

And how He will be and work in their lives.

How he, Spirit of Truth

Will take of Jesus and shall shew it to us.

Will guide us into all truth.

He will return to the Father

And will send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter,

To indwell in us,

We received Him at our baptism and again at our confirmation.

If we can heed St James' advice

Be swift to hear

Slow to speak and slow to wrath

We will receive with meekness the engrafted word

Which is able to save our souls.

